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SUBJECT: MARCH 14 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: IRAN AND DPRK NUCLEAR ISSUES, PRC/AUSTRALIA URANIUM PACT, UNITED STATES/PRC MILITARY EXCHANGES, PRC/PAKISTAN, TRILATERAL SECURITY TALKS, PRC/BRAZIL, PRC/AFRICA, PRC/JAPAN

Summary

¶1. Key points made at the March 14 MFA press briefing are as follows:

- China supports the Russia-Iran talks, wants to see the Iranian nuclear issue resolved through negotiation, wants to ensure the authority of the international nuclear nonproliferation, hopes Iran will build confidence and urges all sides to exercise restraint and avoid escalating the situation. There is still room to resolve the issue through negotiation.

- Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Chun Young Woo, new Head of the ROK Six-Party Talks Delegation, met March 10 for an in-depth exchange of views. Qin had no information when asked about reports of a meeting between Wu and DPRK MFA Director General Li Gun. When asked about Banco Delta Asia, he said the PRC will take action according to law to combat money-laundering

- The PRC believes military exchanges between the United States and China are mutually beneficial.

- Qin sidestepped the question of whether the PRC and Australia signed a uranium sales pact.

- President Musharraf's recent visit covered a range of bilateral and international affairs. China will work together with Pakistan and South Asian countries to promote prosperity and maintain stability in South Asia.

- Vice Premier Wu Yi and VP Alencar will co-chair the first session of the PRC/Brazil High-level Committee on Consultation and Cooperation in Beijing during Alencar's March 19-24 visit to China. End Summary.

Iranian Nuclear Issue

¶2. Asked about Iran's nuclear ambitions, Qin remarked that China and most members of the international community seek to maintain the seriousness and authority of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. China supports Russia's negotiations with Iran. China is trying to play a

constructive role with intensive negotiations with all parties concerned. The PRC hopes Iran will do more to build mutual confidence but does not wish to see the situation destabilized. There is still room to resolve the issue through negotiation, according to Qin, who urged all parties to exercise restraint and avoid escalating the situation.

Six-Party Talks

¶ 13. Asked to comment on the March 10 consultations between Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Chun Young Woo, th new Head of the ROK Six-Party Talks delegatin, Qin said they held an in-depth exchange of views and agreed to stay in close contact on atters related to peace and stability in Northeast Asia. DFM Chun also met Assistant Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai, Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei and DG for North American and Oceanian Affairs Liu Jieyi to exchange views on relevant issues, Qin added.

¶ 14. Asked to comment on information that DPRK Six-Party Talks delegate Li Gun was spotted departing Beijing airport on March 14, following a purported meeting with VFM Wu, Qin said he had no information on the Li Gun-Wu Dawei meeting.

¶ 15. Qin said the PRC attaches great importance to anti-money laundering and signed the Anti-Money Laundering Convention when he was asked for an update on anti-money laundering investigations related to

BEIJING 00004766 002 OF 003

Banco Delta Asia in Macau. If money laundering is discovered, Chinese authorities will take action. The Macau government will handle its investigation in accordance with the law, asserted Qin.

United States/PRC Military Exchanges

¶ 16. With Secretary Rumsfeld's visit to China in October, 2005, the PRC and United States agreed to strengthen military exchanges, Qin said in response to a question on the nature of such exchanges. He stated that talks occur at a number of levels, from high-level visits to exchanges between academics and defense-related institutions. The exchanges are rich in content, cover a wide range of topics and are mutually beneficial. China wants to enhance trust and ensure the stable development of relations with the United States in the twenty-first century, Qin noted.

Sino-Australian Uranium Pact?

¶ 17. Questioned whether the PRC and Australia had signed an agreement on uranium sales that will be announced during Premier Wen Jiabao's planned April visit to Australia, Qin said he did not have any information on such an agreement but would keep the press updated. He noted that Sino-Australian cooperation on nuclear energy serves the interests of both countries and deepens bilateral ties. Both countries support the international nonproliferation regime and will honor their nonproliferation commitments, Qin added.

Trilateral Security Talks

¶ 18. Questioned about United States/Australia/Japan trilateral security talks and concerns about China's military buildup, Qin noted Premier Wen Jiabao's March

14 NPC press conference focused on China's peaceful development. He referred the press to Premier Wen's ten points, hoping this will help the international community gain a better, more comprehensive understanding of how China's foreign policy serves its goal of peaceful development. China is a force for peace in the Asia/Pacific region and the world, Qin asserted.

PRC/Japan Relations

¶9. When asked about China's relations with Japan, Qin referred to Premier Wen's statement at his March 14 press conference, saying that Beijing's relations with Tokyo relations are based on the three PRC/Japan political documents. Japan should use history as a mirror and look to the future while handling properly the Taiwan issue. Asked about Tokyo's response to Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing's recent criticism of Prime Minister Koizumi for visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, Qin questioned rhetorically whether Tokyo should harm and undermine relations by misleading the public or should guide the media and public opinion in a correct and comprehensive manner. China hopes Japan will earnestly express remorse regarding its history, Qin stated.

¶10. Asked to clarify Premier Wen's remarks on PRC/Japan relations, Qin noted Premier Wen described the three aspects to the relations: strategic dialogue; cultural exchange; and economic and trade ties. All are equally important and indispensable. They ensure all around stable development, Qin said.

Pakistan and South Asia

¶11. Asked to describe China's cooperation with Pakistan and South Asia in light of President Musharraf's recent visit, Qin cited Premier Wen's remarks at the National People's Conference (NPC)

BEIJING 00004766 003 OF 003

closing press conference and said China's foreign policy is designed to promote amicable relations and partnerships in the region. Relations with Pakistan are friendly and based on equal respect and mutual benefit. As a neighbor and friend, China will work together with Pakistan and other South Asian countries to deepen ties. Last year, China and Pakistan began strategic cooperation. President Musharraf's visit covered a range of bilateral and international affairs. China will work together with Pakistan and South Asian countries to promote prosperity and maintain stability in the South Asia, Qin said.

PRC Hosts African Journalists

¶12. Qin noted that 43 African journalists from 23 countries attended the press conference as part of a PRC-hosted two-week seminar. The seminar is designed to boost further PRC/Africa friendship and cooperation. Qin said he hoped the journalists would report to their countries that China's government and people value their friendship with Africa and seek to enhance the relationship. PRC/Africa relations mark their fiftieth anniversary in 2006 and China will host the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation in November, Qin added.

Visits

¶13. Brazil's Vice President Jose Alencar will visit

China from March 19 to 24 at the invitation of Vice President Zeng Qinghong. During the visit, Vice Premier Wu Yi and VP Alencar will co-chair the first session of the PRC/Brazil High-level Committee on Consultation and Cooperation in Beijing. Separately, President of the Commonwealth of Dominica Nicolas Liverpool will pay an informal visit to China from March 19 to 25.

RANDT